

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2015

The Honorable Ander Crenshaw
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
House Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Crenshaw:

We are writing to request that funding limitation language for the District of Columbia's Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment (RHNDAA) Act of 2014 and the Human Rights Amendment (HRAA) Act of 2014 be included in the Fiscal Year 2016 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill.

As you are aware, RHNDAA and HRAA contain provisions that would violate the religious liberty of employers and institutions located in the District and would undermine the long-standing religious protections contained in the Constitution, as well as federal law protecting the free-exercise of religion. Specifically, Section 3 of the RHNDAA would require District-based employers to cover elective abortions in any employer-offered health insurance plan. This provision would force religious institutions and other pro-life employers to violate deeply held beliefs, values, and principles, and would amount to a government-mandated violation of the Constitution. In fact, RHNDAA would substantially interfere with the foundational liberties established at our nation's founding, including freedom of religion, speech, and free association.

In addition to RHNDAA, the HRAA raises serious religious liberty concerns. This legislation would eliminate current federal protections for institutions from being forced to act contrary to religious beliefs and tenets. HRAA would overturn statutory protections and force District-based religious schools to recognize, approve, and accommodate any campus organization, no matter how counter the campus organization's mission runs to an institution's core beliefs.

This is not a partisan issue. In a December 2, 2014 letter to the District Council, Democratic Mayor Vincent Gray expressed concern that HRAA "raises serious concerns under the Constitution and under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA). Religious organizations, religiously-affiliated organizations, religiously-driven for-profit entities, and political organizations may have strong First Amendment and RFRA grounds for challenging the law's applicability to them."

Fortunately, Congress has legislative power over the District's law-making authority. Should the president fail to sign a resolution of disapproval blocking RHNDAA and HRAA from becoming D.C. law, the committee should ensure that any Fiscal Year 2016 appropriations measure contains language that would prohibit funds to implement or carry out any rule or regulation associated with RHNDAA and HRAA. It is our belief that Congress must wield its constitutional "power of the purse" to prevent infringement of the fundamental constitutional protections for District-based employers and institutions.

Sincerely,



Rep. Bill Flores



Rep. Diane Black



Rep. Joe Pitts



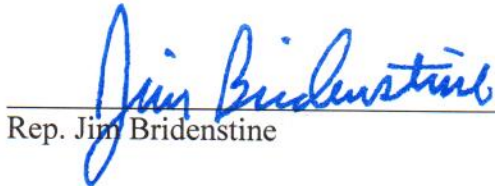
Rep. Marsha Blackburn



Rep. Rick Allen



Rep. Brian Babin



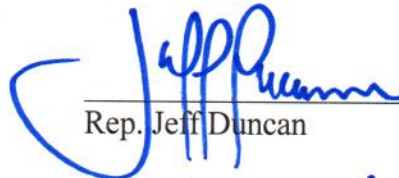
Rep. Jim Bridenstine



Rep. Bradley Byrne



Rep. Doug Collins



Rep. Jeff Duncan



Rep. Renee Ellmers



Rep. Stephen Fincher



Rep. John Fleming



Rep. Trent Franks



Rep. Scott Garrett



Rep. Bob Gibbs



Rep. Paul Gosar



Rep. Glenn Grothman

Vicky Hartzler

Rep. Vicky Hartzler

Jeb Hensarling

Rep. Jeb Hensarling

Jody Hice

Rep. Jody Hice

Tim Huelskamp

Rep. Tim Huelskamp

Bill Huizenga

Rep. Bill Huizenga

Randy Hultgren

Rep. Randy Hultgren

Walter B. Jones

Rep. Walter Jones

Mike Kelly

Rep. Mike Kelly

Doug LaMalfa

Rep. Doug LaMalfa

Doug Lamborn

Rep. Doug Lamborn

Bob Latta

Rep. Bob Latta

Daniel Lipinski

Rep. Daniel Lipinski

Thomas Massie

Rep. Thomas Massie

Tom McClintock

Rep. Tom McClintock

Mark Meadows

Rep. Mark Meadows

Jeff Miller

Rep. Jeff Miller

John Moolenaar

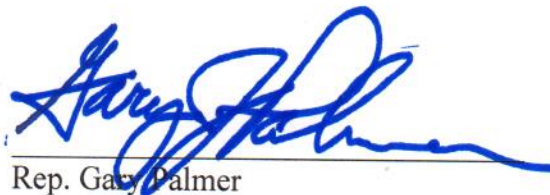
Rep. John Moolenaar

Randy Neugebauer

Rep. Randy Neugebauer



Rep. Pete Olson



Rep. Gary Palmer



Rep. Robert Pittenger



Rep. Keith Rothfus



Rep. David Rouzer



Rep. Steve Russell



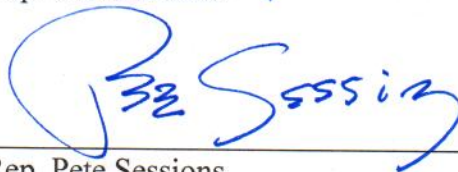
Rep. Matt Salmon



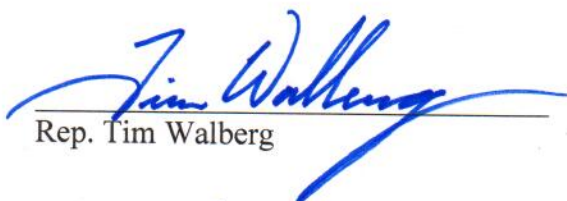
Rep. Steve Scalise



Rep. Austin Scott



Rep. Pete Sessions



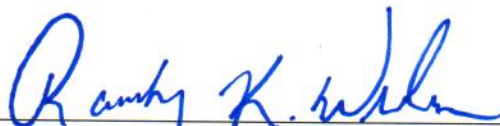
Rep. Tim Walberg



Rep. Jackie Walorski



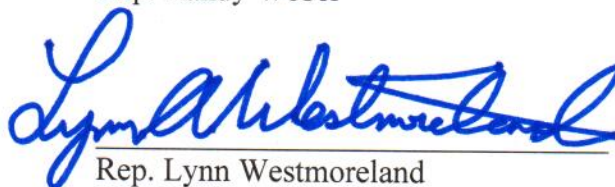
Rep. Bruce Westerman



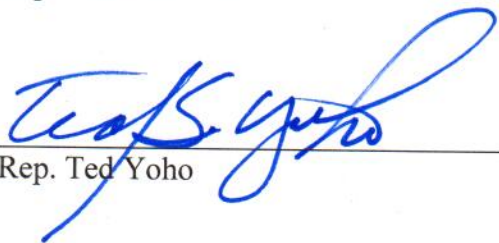
Rep. Randy Weber



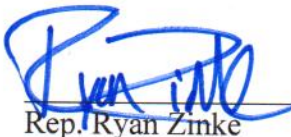
Rep. Mark Walker



Rep. Lynn Westmoreland



Rep. Ted Yoho



Rep. Ryan Zinke

Mike Bishop

Rep. Mike Bishop

Steve Chabot

Rep. Steve Chabot

K. Conaway

Rep. Mike Conaway

J. Randy Forbes

Rep. J. Randy Forbes

Bob Goodlatte

Rep. Bob Goodlatte

French Hill

Rep. French Hill

Richard Hudson

Rep. Richard Hudson

Lynn Jenkins

Rep. Lynn Jenkins

Steve Pearce

Rep. Steve Pearce

Mike Pompeo

Rep. Mike Pompeo

Phil Roe

Rep. Phil Roe

Chris Smith

Rep. Chris Smith

Brad Wenstrup

Rep. Brad Wenstrup